

Hit The Beach!

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The Southern California ASL Club Newsletter



The President's Corner

By Brandon Liesemeyer

Well, I've been steering this ship for almost a year now and I like the direction it is going. We have a good head of steam leading into WCM IV and have had three very successful one-day tournaments over the course of the year. Unless there are any objections I intend to continue as the Club President for one and only one more year. If anyone out there objects, please say so that we can make preparations for an election at WCM IV. With that being said, I would like to vocalize an observation I've made regarding the Club. There are about 5 people that do 98% of the work in the Club. This is no different than any other Club that I've been a member of and it does not bother me one bit. It brings me pleasure knowing that the work me and the others do provides newsletters to your door, websites to visit and tournaments you only need to attend, without another thought. I suppose that from time to time others would like to lend a hand and I know this because people come to me and ask, "Is there something I can do?" If these folks are persistent, eventually some matter of the Club is entrusted to them to do with as they please. I would hope that every member feels at least some tiny bit of duty to put something back into the Club, and this brings me to my topic.

In the bridge building business we bid com-

petitively to receive a contract to build a Caltrans bridge. The way we come up with a bid price is we calculate how much it will cost us to build the bridge then we assign a risk to the project. This risk is used to determine our margin (percent increase) which is between 5 and 8 percent on a \$50 million job. What's my point? It's this. I get quite a bit of flak about the entry fee for WCM, the club dues and the price of the tee shirts. The reason we have to charge so much is the risk. Because we receive so few pre-registrations/commitments to shirts we have to mitigate our risk with a lower estimation of WCM attendance/tee shirt sales. With lower expected registrations/sales to spread the cost, we must charge a bit more to insure that we cover expenses. The bottom line is this; the more guesswork we have to do the more you have to pay.



Brandon "got DC?" Liesemeyer

So if you want to do your part, please give Jim and I some numbers to work with when ordering and setting up. At this time we have 10 pre-reg forms, how are we supposed to order 70 or so shirts of different sizes based on these numbers? If you intend on playing and/or buying a tee shirt, please let us know anyway you can. Today. This minute.

Now: Only the receipt of a pre-registration form before the due date (January 18th) qualifies you for the discount rate. This extra info only helps us with the planning. If you have sent in a form already there is no need to inform us again. I look forward to seeing you all very soon at WCM IV.

After Action Report:

"Arnhem! Part II"

By Brandon Liesemeyer

Well after two or three hours in the Oosterbeek museum I was ready to take a walk around the town and see the bridge, but on the way out we saw the brochure rack which mentioned several other museums in the immediate area. So after a quick group huddle we made our way to the International Museum 1939-1945.

The International Museum 1939-1945 is a completely different type of museum than the

(Continued on page 9)

What's Inside?

By Matthew Cicero

Hit The Beach! rolls into 2001 with its first issue of the new millennium! We've got a lot to offer this issue but first I wanted to go over a couple things going on in the internet. Paul Simonsen has been battering his keyboard tirelessly for months now and the results are some pretty incredible features for our Club website: 1) online AARs; 2) Cup Standings; 3) Club W/L records for scenarios; 4) scenario database links; 5) a people finder feature for Clubbers; and 6) a feedback feature for HTB! Oh, did I mention that our very own Paul is now the ASL Crossroads Meister as well? Seems the War Times Journal folks begged and he graciously took up the burden! Lay all that along side the incredible Coastal Fortress website and one might say that the SoCal ASL ain't doin' too shabby on the internet these days! I think a round of applause is in order for Paul, Steve and Scott...buy 'em a beer at WCM IV, why doncha?

Well, back to HTB! The Marine Corps celebrated its 225th anniversary on November 10th, 2000. The Continental Congress authorized a "corps" of Marines in 1775 and they've been getting stronger ever since. In honor of the Beloved Corps, I thought we'd go for a Marine Theme this issue. OOH RAH!

Scenarios: This issue we have 3 playtest scenarios from our prolific designer, Chris Olden. Guys, I can't encourage you enough to dust off those scenario ideas and send them in. I think Chris is gonna start bleeding at the ears if I ask him for three more next issue! By the way, we catch up with our new HTB! Scenario numbering system this issue with HTB! 6. HTB! 1 through HTB! 5 were in HTB! Vol. 5 No. 3.

A Moment in History: Steve Dethlefsen brings us "Bred for Battle: A Short History of the 6 Marine Divisions in World War II."

Roll Call: Scott Thompson stepped into the breach (onto the beach?) when he heard I wanted to do a Marine issue.

AARs: This issue I bring you a book review of *Utmost Savagery*, while Brandon Liesemeyer shares another installment of his "Arnhem!" review and Jim Aikens fills us in on ASLOK 2000.

The Grogard Speaks! Check out Rich Spilky's "Motion, Bounding and Vehicular FT and FP Multipliers Chart." Rob Stai and Brandon Liesemeyer each favor us with a "Did You Know?" Lastly, Bob Smith has compiled a short list of OBA Scenarios to tickle your fancy.

D.Y.O.: This issue, we will be featuring The Pastor's Corner with Robert Hammond's excellent article "Spicing Up the Game, Part I" In addition, Evan Sherry provides us with some terrific insights in "Scenario Design."

Rounding out the issue is another ASL Challenge!, a great quote by Col. David M. Shoup, U.S.M.C. and the latest Cup Ladder standings.

Please think about a submission for a future issue. I am on the lookout for a fun Scenario Analysis or some Tactical Tips or even an AAR! Maybe someone will even try a small Scenario Replay. Lastly, please tell me what you think of HTB! Check out the newsletter portion of our Club website and fill out a Feedback Form for me. Enjoy!

Editor@socalasl.com



Matt "got CC?" Cicero

After Action Report: ASLOK 2000

By Jim Aikens

Jim made his annual pilgrimage to Cleveland in October and, true to form, had a blast. He did, however, mention that though ASLOK was awesome and completely fulfilling...it still doesn't hold a flame next to WCM! Right, Jim? -ed.

I thought I'd give a review of the scenarios I played during ASLOK.

U4 Climax at Nijmegen (vs. Alan Saltzman) (G.I. Pack):

I remembered this one from G.I. and it was at the top of my play list. This scenario saw a lot of action at ASLOK, and for good reason; it's a blast to play and very challenging for both sides. Word around the tables was it's a bit pro-German, but many thought it was too close to call. I won as the German, against a very experienced player who had played the Allies twice before, but it was very close. I strongly recommend it; it's as fun as it looks.

(Rating: A+)

SP60 Commando Kelly (vs. Ken Miodoski) (Schwerpunkt 5):

This is a monster, and frankly, it wasn't my first choice, but my opponent "really" wanted to play it. It's really two scenarios in one. The first part is a small American force trying to hold off a very large German force from over-running a town. As Evan Sherry remarked, "yes, the town will fall to the Germans, the question is when, and at what price." Then the Germans have to exit a bunch of points off the board, while 6 American Shermans arrive in the nick of time. It's the tank duel that makes the game interesting; the town fight is really more of a sideshow. I won with the Americans. I think it's pretty balanced, but the player who can handle his tanks the best will probably win this one. **(Rating: B-)**

U7 Han-Sur-Neid (vs. Wayne Haddady) (G.I. Pack):

This is another scenario that saw a lot of action. The Americans have a fairly small OB, but enough to do the job. The Germans come on in three groups over four turns, with random entry as to both turn and location. This makes it a bit hard on the Germans to coordinate an attack. If the Germans rush the Americans piecemeal, it will be a short game. The Germans have to be patient, assemble their force, and hit with a coordinated attack. This scenario came down to the wire, with lots of action over the last three turns. I won as the Germans, but it was very close, as were most of the playings of this scenario that I observed. Due to the random entry, there's a lot of replay value here. I recommend it. **(Rating: A)**

J25 The Weigh In (vs. Brian Martusas) (Journal 1):

I met Brian at my first ASLOK 4 years ago, and we've been trying to hook up for a game ever since. This scenario was on both of our play lists. Brian had the Poles and I took the Germans. Brian's a great guy, and fun to play against, but this game went badly for him from the start, and I was in the town in strength on turn four when he finally threw in the towel. Funny, this is the same point that Doug's opponent (playing the Germans) quit. I'd like to give this another try. I think it's worth the effort. **(Rating: none)**

(Continued on page 9)

ASL Challenge! A Marine Quiz...

Think you've got that Chapter G memorized? Give these a whirl and see...

1. What does a 668 Marine squad become if it has an SSR-indicated ELR of 2 and it fails a morale check by > its ELR?
2. What's the ASL capability which differentiates a U.S.M.C. Paramarine squad from a U.S.M.C. Raider squad?
3. When can the U.S. use napalm?
4. Which U.S.M.C. squad type can deploy during a scenario without a leader present?
5. What are 3 types of "breaking" which will not cause a Japanese unit to suffer Step Reduction?
6. What is one defensive option not available to an AFV confronted by a T-H Hero?
7. What is the morale of a T-H Hero conducting a Banzai charge?
8. What hexes are considered 'Swamp' if PTO Terrain is in effect?
9. Are the Berserk counters used for Dare Death squads Red Letters on White or White on Red?
10. What squad type do unarmed Marine squads become when re-armed?

Answers on Page 8.

Roll Call!

Scott "got Dice?" Thompson

HTB!: What got you started in ASL?

ST: I have always been interested in military history, especially WWII. Back in High School, either the end of 1980 or beginning of 1981, I had a friend who told me about this game that he and some of his friends played called *Squad Leader*. He had a copy of *Squad Leader*, while his friend had a copy of *Cross of Iron*. We played all the scenarios then began to play DYO using the point system at the back of the rulebooks. I can remember games where we would each get 2000 points or more to purchase our OB's. We would use every map in the system, all 5 of them, at once and enter our forces from opposite sides of the battlefield. The player who controlled the most mapboards won. Then we all graduated and in 1984 I went into the Marine Corps. I sold all of my modules and scenarios because I believed that I would never have time to play in the service. A year later I ended up purchasing all four modules again!

HTB!: When did you start playing?

ST: In 1986 I was still in the Marines and I happened to go into a game store. I saw, in the far back corner of the store, a copy of the *Advanced Squad Leader RuleBook* and *Beyond Valor*. I purchased both and then spent the rest of the weekend reading through them. I was never able to find anyone who played, but I kept buying everything that came out in the hopes that one day I would play. In 1996 I purchased a copy of Heat of Battle's *Blood Reef Tarawa* module at the old Gamesmanship in South Coast Plaza. My copy of the rules was cut off on one edge and I noticed that HOB was based out of Newport Beach. I lived in Costa Mesa at the time so I wrote a letter to Eddie Zeman requesting a new copy of the rules. Eddie showed up at my door one Saturday morning (now that's customer service!) with another copy of the rules...turns out he lived in the same block as me, only two streets over! He asked if I played and I told him that I owned everything but had never been able to find anyone to play with. He gave me the names and phone numbers of several players in the area. A few days later I got a phone call from Kent Smoak telling me about the Club.

HTB!: How did you learn the game?

ST: I had read the rulebook several times over the course of ten years between when I bought it and actually began to play. When I met Eddie, he got me in touch with Dave "Fingers" Coleman who also lived in Costa Mesa. Dave suggested that I reread the first four chapters again, twice through, before we played. My first ASL scenario that I played with Dave was T5 "The Pouppeville Exit". I was the Americans and I got creamed, but I was hooked! I played many scenarios with Dave and learned much from him (usually from my defeats!) and began to attend the Club functions. I attended

my first tournament in 1997, the "Big Cats at Play" tourney at Biola, just 4 days after the birth of my first daughter...Am I a bad Dad, or just an ASL junkie? Most of my learning has come from the beatings that I have had administered to me over the course of the last 4 years. There is nothing better to help you understand how to use smoke, for example, than to have an opponent completely shut down your defense with the proper use of it!

HTB!: How do you prefer to play?

ST: I prefer face to face play. I enjoy the anticipation of knowing that I will get to play a scenario on the next Saturday. I play much better when I have time to set up the map and plan my defense/offense. Tournaments are great because you get to overdose on ASL in just a couple of days. The down side is that you are rushed to set up a defense/offense and you feel obligated (or at least should feel) to play quicker.

HTB!: What is your favorite nationality?

ST: While not really a separate nationality, more a sub-nationality, I have an affinity for playing the U.S.M.C. The late-war Marines are, IMHO, the best squads in the system...of course being a former Marine myself makes me a little prejudiced! Other than that, I am open to playing any nationality...though the Germans do have the best toys!

HTB!: What's your favorite kind of game?

ST: I enjoy playing the defense most of all. I like setting up my defense, traps and surprises and waiting to see if they will play out or not. Combined arms scenarios also have a strong appeal to them...coordinating tanks and infantry attacks and defenses adds more dimensions to the game. This will sound contradictory, but I have also played some tank only scenarios and had a blast.

HTB!: Do you have a favorite scenario list?

ST: How can you honestly expect anyone to choose from all those scenarios out there?! Some of my more memorable scenarios include "Clash along the Psel," "Alligator Creek," "Bread Factory #2," "Flying Column to Kilchu" and "Just in Case." I am ashamed to admit it, but I have yet to play "Hill 621" or "The Last Bid," both of which have been high on my "To Play" list for a long time.

HTB!: Name your Best/Worst experiences.

ST: I would have to say that playtesting has been my greatest experience, and actually gotten my name into the ASLRB (if you include the pages for Blood Reef Tarawa). On the fun side, the scenario that I played with Karl Johnson in which I generated four heroes (in one turn) will always stand out as well as the time I was playing "Bread Factory #2" with Robert Hammond in which I predicted (before the game) which unit would battle harden and generate a hero. That year, 1999, I had an average of nearly 2 heroes per game generated for all scenarios played. My worst experience would have to be going 2-6 at West Coast Melee III...I'm not THAT bad of a player, honest! Damn dice!

HTB!: What would you like to try next?

ST: I'd like to try quitting my job and playing ASL on the Pro Circuit! Seriously, I would like to give VASL a try. Time has unfortunately be-

come very limited for playing (where were you guys when I was single?) and I see VASL as a way to possibly play more. I would like to try CGIII in Red Barricades again (Paul and I owe you, Karl J. and Robert H.!). I would REALLY like to try to go to Octoberfest. I've got a buddy from the Marines who lives in Cleveland, so I have a free place to stay, but I never seem to be able to take the time in October.

HTB!: Any recommendations for newbies?

ST: Yup.

1. Read the ASLRB. Read it over and over and over again. Study it, worship it, sleep with it under your pillow...just read it. I have been playing for 4 years now and I still am learning the little nuances that are hidden in the rules.

2. Observe others at play. Attend a club function or tournament and quietly observe some games being played. You can see how these rules play out in the game. You can also learn tactics and strategy by observing. The one thing that was the hardest for me when I began playing was the overwhelming amount of rules that you have to read before you can play. By observing someone else, you can see the rules demonstrated first hand and increase your understanding of the rules.

3. PLAY. Reading the rules will only take you so far. You have to play and play "often" in order to get a grasp on the mechanics and dynamics of the game. Don't be afraid to lose, just try to learn from each game. It took me over six months to win my first game...now I regularly beat the guy that taught me how to play! (At least there is someone I can beat!) Before you know it, you will be a good player also.

HTB!: Any final comments?

ST: I love this game (but hate the damned dice)! I would like to thank the SoCal ASL Club for being the great bunch of guys that you all are, and especially the memory of Kent Smoak for inviting me into the Club. I have made some good friends and had some awesome playing experiences in the last 4 years. Thank you all.

HTB!: Thanks Scott!



Scott double-checking a LOS...

Moments in History

Bred for Battle: A short history of the 6 Marine Divisions in World War II

By Steve Dethlefsen



For the United States, World War Two was truly a global conflict. Two very different wars were fought in Europe and in the Pacific. In the vast Pacific Theater, a fighting force developed that became one of, if not the most feared Battle Force in the world.

In 1940, the Corps of Marines numbered 27,345 Marines and Officers. By the end of the War there were 6 full Divisions with almost 475,000 Marines wearing the "Eagle Globe and Anchor." The following is a brief history of the 6 Divisions that made up the Marine Corps. Some study aids: By convention and custom the word *Marine* always starts with a capital letter when writing about the Corps or individuals. Units of regimental size are titled "Marines" as in 26th Marines. This is understood as the same as "Infantry" for army units.

THE OLD BREED

The First Marine Division

The 1st Mar. Div. developed out of the 1st Marine Brigade. Brigade organizations were phased out in favor of the triangle set up of three regiments. The regiments of the Old Breed were the 1st Marines, the 5th Marines, and the 7th Marines. Tank support was provided by the 1st Tank Battalion. Artillery support was from the 10th Marines.



The Division was first deployed to Guadalcanal for Operation WATCHTOWER. After taking the airfield in a bloodless action in August of 1942, the Old Breed fought for 5 months in one of the most inhospitable areas on earth. During the fight for Guadalcanal, the Division fought with great distinction and tenacity. By the time the 1st Division was replaced by the Americal, (37th Infantry Division), the Division had lost 621 Marine brothers to the island with another 1,517 wounded. In addition, over 5,600 men suffered the ravishes of malaria. Five Marines won the Medal of Honor. 113 earned the Navy Cross. It was said of the Marines that left "starvation island" that everyone left part of themselves there. For the Japanese, 30,000 of the 40,000 soldiers and sailors never left Guadalcanal.

The Green Hell of New Britain was the next stop for the 1st Marine Division after 18 months of rest and refit in Australia. The Division came ashore in 4 landing areas. All normal rules for tactics and maneuver were thrown out the window. The rain, mud and jungle made the war a more personal affair. A Marine officer stated, "Ah, I can tell you it was a very small war and a very lonely business." Two months of small unit actions left the Division again ready for the gentle paradise of Australia.

"It is a fruitless and unrewarding business, that of trying to tell a civilian, or a soldier who served in another theater of war, about how rigorous and dispiriting are the periods not in, but between, combat in the Pacific," says the 1st Division history. That may be true, but it was written before the next test, Peleliu.

Peleliu was for the Old Breed the most trying and heartbreaking campaign of the war. Set near the equator, the battle raged for weeks in the oppressive heat with little water and a very well dug in and determined enemy. Peleliu can be said to be the one battle that did not have to happen. The invasion was designed to cover the flank of MacArthur's invasion of the Philippines. Of all the battles Marines fought in the War, Peleliu has the most bitterness. The stubborn defenses took the lives of too many Marines for questionable purpose. A much glossed over fact about the battle is that the Marines' most known leader, "Chesty" Puller, was relieved of command for incurring too many casualties. Over 1,000 Marines were killed and another 5,000 wounded. They also earned a Presidential Unit Citation.

The last battle for the Old Breed was Okinawa. Operation ICEBERG. The 1st Mar. Div. was tasked with taking the northern part of the island. After little initial resistance (the Japanese had a better plan than simply wasting lives on the beach), the interior of Okinawa proved to be a labyrinth of caves and well-hidden concrete positions. The Division was fed into the teeth of the defenses in the south and earned yet another PUC. The Old Breed was then sent to China, where many of the Marines had been stationed before the war.

FOLLOW ME!

The Second Marine Division

The 2nd Mar. Div. started the war in Iceland. Built around the 6th Marines, the unit was filled out with the 8th Marines and the 2nd Marines. The 11th Marines provided artillery support. The first action for the Division was at Tulagi and Gavutu. The 2nd Marines and parts of the other regiments were then diverted from the Southwest Pacific area to Guadalcanal to help the spent 1st Marine Division. After a rest in the Division's adopted home of New Zealand, they faced the toughest test yet known in warfare. The first fully opposed landing on a defended beach was the task given to the 2nd Mar. Div. The small island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll was a test of all the doctrine and skill of the Marines. The bloody invasion woke America up to the fact that this was going to be a tough and bloody endeavor. The Marines lost over 1,000 killed and 3,000 wounded...the biggest single loss of men in the War to date and still the highest casualty rate per day in Marine history.

After a rest in Hawaii, the Division prepared for the next landing, Saipan. This landing saw refinements to equipment and doctrine identified during the Tarawa invasion. It was also more of a land battle than that at the smaller island. Saipan saw some of the Marine Tankers of the 2nd Tank Battalion showing the vast superiority of the Sherman tank against the weak armor of the Japanese. The Saipan battle forced the Marines to learn the art of city fighting.

After Saipan, the Division made a relatively



quick landing at Tinian in July of 1944. Tinian became one of the largest airbases in the world housing B-29s that could then take the war to Japan.

Six months later the Division landed with the 1st Marine Division on Okinawa. The Division was the main feint attack on the eastern side of the island. The 6th Marines got into the fight in March 1945 and the remainder of the Division landed on smaller islands in supporting attacks.

The Second Marine Division then landed in Japan, in September, for occupation duty.

THE THUNDERING THIRD

The Third Marine Division

The 3rd Mar. Div. was formed around the 3rd Marine Regiment. Made up almost entirely of recruits from Paris Island, the unit was later filled out with the 9th Marines and the "war born" 21st Marines. Artillery was from the 12th Marines. The Division struggled at first in its initial assembly area of Somoa. The area left too many units ravished by malaria and other tropical ailments.

The unit's first action was the jungles of Bougainville, November 1, 1943. The Division went ashore green and entered its "school of hard knocks." Bougainville was a large island in the central Solomons. After a month of fighting in the dense jungles and mangrove forests, the Division accomplished a tremendous feat of arms and returned a finely tuned jungle force.

After a rest at Guadalcanal, the unit went to Guam in July of 1944. In 21 days the 3rd Mar. Div. had overrun 60 square miles of Guam, losing 619 killed and 3,600 wounded.

The next stop for the Division was the black hell of Iwo Jima. At first only the 21st Marines landed. Severe casualties, and the realization that Iwo might be the toughest fight yet, called for the landing of the 9th Marines. The Thundering Third fought hard to secure the Motoyama airfields and the fortresses in the center of the islands.

The Division was back on Guam preparing for the invasion of Japan when news of the end of the War came.

THE FIGHTING FOURTH

The Fourth Marine Division

The 4th Mar. Div. was initiated at Camp Lejeune and put together as a fighting unit at Camp Pendleton, California. This unit had the 23rd, 24th, and 25th Marine Infantry and the 14th Marine Artillery Battalion along with the 4th Tank Battalion.

The 4th Mar. Div. was the first Marine unit to attack directly from its base in America and the first to capture a Japanese mandated territory in the Pacific. Operation FLINTLOCK was the

(Continued on page 5)



("Bred for Battle" Continued from page 4)

long awaited attack on the Marshalls. Roi-Namur of the Kwajalein Atoll was the pivot point of the Japanese defenders in the Marshalls. The Airfield on Roi is shaped like a number 4 for which the division took its patch.

The Division then joined the 2nd Division for the invasion of Saipan, in June of 1944. 4,000 Marines of the unit were ashore in an amazing 20 minutes. The ridges and natural caves were grueling for the units fighting on "hilly Saipan". The unit won a PUC for the action.

The Division then landed on Tinian on the northern end of the island, fighting along the western edge of the island. After Tinian the Division rested on Maui, some of the most rain soaked days the men had faced.

February of 1945 brought the unit to Iwo Jima. The 4th Mar. Div. was landed in the center of the landing zone between the 5th and 3rd Divisions. After the battle, the Division returned to Maui for the duration of the War.

THE SPEARHEAD

The Fifth Marine Division

The 5th Mar. Div. crossed the Pacific in the northern areas. The Division was made up of the 26th, 27th, and 28th Infantry Regiments, the 13th Marine Artillery 5th tank and 5th Engineer battalions.

The unit only fought in one action: Iwo Jima. However, they are the most famous of the Divi-



sions taking part. The 5th Mar. Div. had many outstanding writers that wrote post war books and was the unit responsible for taking the most famous Icon of the war, Mount Suribachi, and for planting the famous flag.

The Fifth was slated a starring role in the coming invasion of Japan and was ultimately sent there for occupation duty.

THE TIGER CUB

The Sixth Marine Division.

The 6th Division was built around the 4th Marine Regiment. (you were probably wondering where that unit went). This unit, although the last formed, had many veterans from the Raider Battalions and Defense Brigades. The Division was filled out with the 29th and 22nd Infantry and the 15th Artillery Regiment.

The forefathers of the unit fought as the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade on Guam, then, after the whole Division was formed and trained on Guadalcanal, it set sail for Okinawa. The Division cleared the northern portion of the island and Mount Yaetake, the dominant feature of the Motobu Peninsula. The unit then had to face south on the eastern flank next to the 1st Marine Division. The unit fought for Sugar loaf and Naha village.

The Division finished its service with occupation duty in Yokosuka Japan, then Northern China.



6 Divisions strong, the Marine units in the Second World War had the most powerful squad-sized units and the most comprehensive training in small unit actions. After the War the Marine Corps was pared to three Divisions. The 1st fought in Korea and the 1st and parts of the 3rd in Vietnam. The 1st Division again fought in Desert Shield and Storm, 7th Marines being the first unit there. The 2nd Division later joined in. The 3rd Division is now the reserve division and the 1st is active on the west coast, while the 2nd is active on the east coast.



Steve "got USMC?" Dethlefsen

After Action Report: Book Review

By Matthew Cicero

57 years ago, roughly 5,000 Marines of the 2nd Marine Division began their assault on Betio Island, Tarawa Atoll in the Gilbert Islands as part of Operation GALVANIC. This conflict was a seminal event for the United States Marine Corps and a pivotal achievement for the United States in the Pacific Theater.

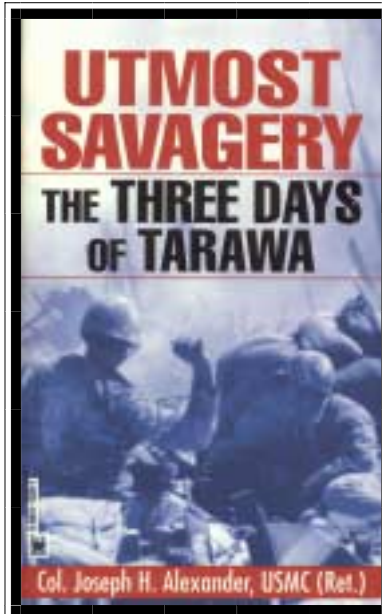
Betio Island is roughly 300 acres of land, less than 2 miles long and about 700 yards wide. It was touted as an unconquerable fortress by the Imperial Japanese Navy. Roughly 4,600 Japanese defenders, including members of the 7th Sasebo Special Japanese Landing Force (Japanese marines), met the assault of the 2nd Marine Division, under Maj. General Julian C. Smith, on November 20, 1943. Three days later, the battle ended. 6,000 dead littered the island and 4 Marines would be awarded the Medal of Honor. Few battles have ever equaled the sustained point blank violence of Betio, Tarawa.

Col. Alexander presents a detailed analysis of the battle of Betio and the many factors which influenced the preparation, execution and aftermath of this brutal clash of arms. Alexander has crafted his excellent work from extensive research of American and Japanese sources, including: 1) the recently translated Japanese war history series, *Senshi Soshō*; 2) newly declassified ULTRA intercepts; 3) personal notes and archives released by participants on the 50th anniversary of Betio; and 4) over 50 personal interviews.

Alexander introduces the battle with the strategic situation leading up to November 1943. America was on the offensive in the Pacific and the U.S. Central Pacific Force was tasked with the taking of the Marshalls via the Gilbert Islands. America had conducted amphibious assaults against fortified positions only on a limited scale previously. Betio would be one of the first true tests...of the

tactics, the weapons and the men that would ultimately enable the U.S. to achieve victory over Japan. At stake was the possibility that the U.S. effort would fail...catastrophically fail, given the type of assault...and in so doing, undermine the confidence in those very strengths which America would need to win in the Pacific.

Alexander then moves into the details of the training, equipping and buildup of the American assault force and the Japanese defensive position. Col. Alexander pays particular attention to the men involved on each side of the battle...the leaders and soldiers that fought and died for their countries. He fleshes out the buildup of each side's forces and the particular strengths and weaknesses each would bring to the battle to come.



The book then details the battle itself, through personal anecdotes and carefully reconstructed descriptions of events. Alexander is able to capture the visceral feel of the combat; the brutality and the suffering that threatened to overwhelm each side. The narrative is punctuated with first hand accounts, illustrative maps and graphics to help the reader keep the events described grounded in the greater context. We learn about the peculiar tidal conditions present during the assault and the differences between Alligators and Water Buffaloes. We also learn about the critical moments where a different decision could have led to a very different outcome to the battle. When you reach the end of this section, you feel drained and maybe a bit incredulous that men could endure such conditions and prevail.

The book ends with a thorough examination of the ramifications of the battle for Betio following a brief accounting of the remaining actions in the Gilbert Islands.

Tarawa has been analyzed for many years. In his book, Alexander manages to take the best of all that has gone before and raise it to a new level of understanding. This book is the definitive novel of not just the battle of Betio, Tarawa but of the troops and tactics that enabled us to succeed in WWII in the PTO.

The Pastor's Corner: "Spicing Up The Game, Part I"

By Robert Hammond

I have taken a look at some variant rules from around the ASL globe. Some stood out. I have included some that are mine, also. The ones presented here are mostly for Infantry. Mind you, the ASLRB has not been canonized, at least not yet! So, here's to "Viva la Difference" and the spice of life.

1. **Gun Concealment.** It would be broken down into three (3) categories, as follows:

- For weapons of 12.7mm to 60mm, use current Concealment rules. This would also work for SW of ATR, INF and light MTR. (Think about it - how come a 155mm ART can keep Concealment but a 45 - 60 mm MTR (SW) can't?).
- For weapons of 61mm to 82mm, keep Concealment if color dr is 1-2 at <=16 hex range and 1-4 at 17+ hex range.
- For weapons of 83mm+, keep Concealment if color dr is 1 at <=16 hex range and 1-3 at 17+ hex range.

For Concealment purposes only, the cdr is modified by the current EC [EXC: if in a building or Pillbox.]. There would also be a -1 for any type of LV Hindrance, a +1 for a RCL weapon, a +1 for Intensive Fire, and a Gun size modifier (i.e. Large = +1, Small = -1). A cdr of 1 would always maintain Concealment; a cdr of 6 would always lose Concealment.

While in the Marines, I saw 105mm and 155mm ART plus RCL fire while at 29 Palms. They were anything but inconspicuous. Granted, I saw these guys in the desert both during the daytime and at night, so, this may have helped. Still, these big bad boys would be seen by all.

2. **Minefield Modifiers.** The following cumulative IFT modifiers apply to Infantry/Cavalry when entering/exiting or performing certain actions while in an A-P Minefield Location:

Entering / Exiting a Minefield Location:

FFNAM, Are or become CX (each)	-1
Broken	-2
Night, Unknown Minefield (each)	-1
Opponent has Booby-Trap capability	-1
German Minefield after 1941	-1
Inexperienced/Green	-1
EC are Ground Snow/Mud	+1
EC are Deep Snow	+2
Friendly A-P Minefield	+1

Activity While in a Minefield Location:

Labor	-1 / -2
Entrenching	-2
CC / Melee	-2
H-to-H CC / Melee	-3
Hazardous Movement	-4
Searching	-(2+h)

["h" represents the # of hexes searched outside of your current hex.]

One of the first items I learned to use was the mine. The mines we used were German WW2 designs! Nothing is more nerve racking than dealing with these things. You can add trip

wires to them. You can cause more than 1 to detonate after only 1 was triggered. You can booby trap them by placing another mine below the first or add a "mouse trap." A mouse trap is a spring loaded activation switch that is set to detonate the mine when either the mine rocks back and forth too much (caused by vehicular traffic or too many troops walking / running by) or is lifted out of the ground. When we knew where the minefield was, there was no way we would just walk through it - let alone run through it!! Walking through an unknown minefield - terror! If you want a good portrayal of walking into an unknown German minefield, watch the movie, "When Trumpets Fade." No matter what the morale is, almost all combat troops would have run away like they do in the movie. In the movie, "Saving Private Ryan," Tom Hanks' character states they did their utmost to avoid and go around the German minefield. As it is right now in ASL, mines are a bit more trouble than Wire, to me. Add the foregoing modifiers and minefields take on the truly terrifying quality that they SHOULD have.

3. **Dropped SW.** If a squad suffers a Casualty Reduction, one SW is dropped for each point the MC is failed if the MC color dr is a 6. [EXC: The SW is dropped if the cdr is 5-6 if C/X.] If the squad suffers a casualty reduction without a subsequent MC, make a subsequent dr. If the dr is a 6 [EXC: A dr 5-6 if C/X], random selection as to which SW is dropped. Why is it that a squad carrying a SW or two never drops them after suffering casualties? You mean it's safer to carry a SW than not to carry a SW?!? {Thanks Scott}

4. **Snipers.** On a dr of 6, move the Sniper normally. Then the following happens:

- If the friendly Sniper moves to an enemy Sniper hex, your opponent can either relocate his Sniper OR make a sniper activation dr. If the enemy Sniper activates this way, it only attacks the friendly Sniper.
- If the friendly Sniper moves to a hex that contains enemy units, all eligible enemy units may conduct a Sniper Check with a -1 modifier and do NOT become TI. However, if these units have fired and / or moved, their total Sniper check modifiers are halved AND they become TI.

Sniper checks are so rare because of the TI part. Plus, Snipers never make any mistakes in the game...and that doesn't make sense.

5. **Sniper Checks.** If an MMC is broken by a Sniper but rallies in the next RPH and the enemy Sniper counter is still in the same hex, this MMC and all other MMC and SMC stacked with the now rallied MMC may go TI for a normal Sniper Check.

6. **SCW Backblast.** Any unit firing a SCW from a confined space is not attacked by the cdr on the 1 IFT column if the white dr is <= the cdr. Now if you score a CH, you don't immolate yourself as well!

7. **Exploding Flamethrowers.** Any PRC/Infantry/Calvary unit that rolls a 6 with the cdr of their MC while carrying a FT causes the FT to explode. Also, any carrying unit that is KIA and the FT is subsequently destroyed, the FT is considered to have exploded. Any MMC attacked by a Sniper dr of 1 or SMC eliminated by a Sniper, make a subsequent dr. A dr of 6 results in the FT exploding. If the FT explodes and the Location contains burnable Terrain, the owning player must make a Kindling DR with a +1 modifier.

If a FT explodes, it attacks all others in the same Location with a 12 FP IFT (15 table if using the IIFT) attack and Concealment does NOT reduce the attack! [EX: Two SMC and a Squad with FT are riding on an AFV that is CE in a forest-road hex. EC are Moderate. The Units were attacked and in the ensuing MC, the Squad rolled a 6 on the color DR of the MC which causes the FT to explode. The owning player makes a Kindling DR and throws a 7 which becomes an 8 due to the +1 modifier and causes a flame to be placed in the Forest-road Location. The owning player makes a DR using the appropriate Table on the (!)IFT and applies the results versus ALL units in the Location which would be both SMC, the carrying unit, and the AFV. The DR is a 2 resulting in a 1KIA. Random selection is used again to determine who is affected. The carrying unit's dr is a 4, both SMC's drs are a 5, the AFV's dr is a 6. This results in a Burning Wreck and subsequently KIA the two SMC, Squad, and the AFV crew.]

Again, as a Combat Engineer, we hated these things. We resigned to either being dead if we used them OR not using them. If someone is carrying a FT, there should be a chance it will explode. And, if the FT explodes, it should go with some gusto! (I point you, again, to the movie "Saving Private Ryan." Look what happens to the guy carrying the FT after they hit the beach!) This rule allows FTs to explode as in the HOB scenario from their King of the Hill HASL pack. {Thanks HOB}

8. **FT & DC Operators.** While in the Marines, only US Combat Engineers used these things. Now, both Scott Thompson and Steve D. are former Marines. Scott was with tanks and Infantry. Steve is a former SMC with the Infantry. Yet, I don't care HOW elite these fellow Devil Dogs may feel, if either of them attempted to use a DC, I would be taking cover - from them!

Only Assault Engineers / Pioneers should be able to use these weapons at full power with no difficulties. Any non-Assault Engineer / Pioneer elite unit using these should have the "X" number lowered by 1 and any attack should suffer a +1. This becomes cumulative as you use lower quality troops. So, a 1st Line squad has the "X" number lowered by 2 and a +2 to any attack. Thus, a Conscript would have the "X" number lowered by 4 and receive a +4 to any attack! Any Final DR >=13 would cause the weapon to explode in the user's location with 1/2 FP. {Thanks MLR}

9. **Armored Assault TEM Negated.** Any fire that originates through the RCA of Infantry using Armored Assault will negate the +1 TEM
(Continued on page 7)

gained for Armored Assault. Also, any consecutive fire that originates from both sides that would result in Encirclement if the Infantry were not moving, will negate the +1 TEM gained for Armored Assault. {Thanks KJ}

10. Building Rubble. If direct fire HE (70mm+) / HEAT (70mm+) / SCW (any) is fired at a building Location and hits or would have hit with building TEM (only) on the Infantry TH Table, the building must take a MC with a base Morale of 9. This MC can never activate an enemy Sniper. The base Morale is increased by +1 for being of stone construction or Fortified; +2 if both apply. If the MC is failed, it causes one DP for each point the MC is failed by. [EXC: Any MC from a CH that is failed will double the DP.] A building Location will become Rubble when the DP equal 2x the TEM. [EX: A Fortified stone building Location would Rubble when the Location has sustained >=8 DP.] Buildings don't last long when being hit with HE rounds. {Thanks Cloyde}

11. MG Crews. Most MMG / HMG were fired by MG (228) crews. If a MMG / HMG is fired by a MG crew, I would allow the crew to be immune to Mandatory Fire Direction and Covering while receiving a -1 to any IFT or TH DR and a raising of the Repair number by 1. If your OB does not have a MG crew, you may "make" a MG crew by removing a squad from your OB. If you remove an Elite squad, it becomes an Elite HS and an Infantry (MG) crew. If you remove a 1st Line squad, it is replaced with a 2nd Line HS and an Infantry (MG) crew. If you remove a 2nd Line squad, it is replaced with a Conscript/Green HS and an Infantry (MG) crew. A MG crew can not be "made" from a Conscript/Green squad. The making of a MG crew can only be done before game start and / or when you set up your reinforcements. I would halve the Inherent FP of a squad that fires a MMG / HMG.

I would also allow for a "Stoppage" result. Whenever an IFT or TH DR equals the current B#, make a subsequent dr to determine if the MG has Malfunctioned or had a Stoppage. A MG with a Stoppage is marked with a No Fire counter which remains on the MG until either the Stoppage is cleared or the MG Malfunctions. On a subsequent dr <= 4 = Stoppage; on a dr >=5 = Malfunction. This dr is modified as follows: +1 if fired by a non-MG crew; +1 Ammo Shortage; +2 Sustained Fire; +2 Captured.

To fix a Stoppage, make a subsequent dr during a repair attempt to determine if the Stoppage is cleared or the MG is Malfunctioned. On a subsequent dr <=4 = Cleared; on a dr >=5 = Malfunction. This dr is modified as follows: +1 if repaired by a non-MG crew; +1 Ammo Shortage; +2 Captured. {Thanks MLR}

12. SW Crews. Most LATW and light mortars were fired by SW (126) crews. If a LATW or light mortar is fired by a SW crew, they receive a -1 to any TH DR and the "X" number of a LATW (BAZ or PSK) is raised by 1. If your OB does not have a SW crew, you may "make" a SW crew by removing either a squad or a HS from your OB. If you remove an Elite squad, it becomes an Elite HS and a SW crew. If you remove a 1st Line squad, it is replaced with a 2nd Line HS and a SW crew. If you remove a 2nd Line squad, it is replaced with a Conscript/Green HS and a SW crew. A SW crew can not be "made" from a Conscript/Green squad. The making of a SW crew can only be done before game start and / or when you set up your reinforcements. {Thanks MLR}

13. Radio Crews. You should not have to sacrifice a SMC to use a radio or phone. I would allow a Vehicle crew to use the radio or phone as a leader. If your OB doesn't have a radio crew, you may freely add one with the sole purpose of using the radio or phone. If the radio or phone quits or the OBA is permanently removed, the crew is under Recall. I would also allow a Radio crew to use Assault Movement in the MPH after using the Radio or Phone in the PFP. {Thanks MLR}

14. Dawn / Dusk LV Hindrance. A DaLV / DuLV Hindrance would be treated like a LOS Hindrance but this would not negate FFMO, Interdiction, or Residual FP. {Thanks MLR}

14.1. DaLV / DuLV Hindrance Types: There would be three different types of LV. For DYO, use the following:
dr of 1, Pre-Dawn / Twilight; 2-3, Early Dawn / Dusk; 4-6, Dawn / Early Dusk.

14.2. DaLV/DuLV Hindrance DRM Chart: Once the type of LV has been determined, use the following Range Chart:

Pre-Dawn / Twilight: 0 = +0 1-4 = +1 5-8 = +2 9-12 = +3 >=13 = +3*

Early Dawn / Dusk: 0-1 = +0 2-7 = +1 8-13 = +2 14-15 = +3 >=16 = +3*

Dawn / Early Dusk: 0-2 = +0 3-10 = +1 11-15 = +2 >=16 = +3*

* = The fire is treated as Area Fire (IFT) or against a Concealed target (TH).

14.3. Concealment Loss: Moving good order Infantry [EXC: pushing a Gun] receiving a +3 DaLV / DuLV Hindrance do not lose Concealment. Assault moving or Advancing good order Infantry moving into Open Ground, as per A10.531, do not lose Concealment. Any Fortification [EXC: Known Minefields, Roadblocks] in Concealment terrain receiving >=+1 DaLV / DuLV Hindrance are revealed as per G.2.

14.4. Concealment Gain: Any good order Infantry receiving >=+2 DaLV / DuLV Hindrance and in the LOS of a Known Enemy unit may attempt to gain Concealment as per A12.122.

14.5. SW Recovery: There is a +1 drm to a SW Recovery attempt [EXC: SW in Building, Pillbox, Trench, Foxhole, Cave, vehicle, Boat].

15. TPBF. Ever had a unit move "into" your location just to strip you of Concealment? The worst (or best) part of it is, the unit is moved back to the last Location it was in. If you want to fire on this unit, you can only fire on it in the Location it is moved back to. Try this. The unit may be fired upon in the Location it attempts to move "into" by the units that lost Concealment with TPBF. The unit that is attacked either receives the TEM of the hexside that was crossed [EXC: walls, hedges, bocage] or the actual Location. If the Attacker is using Assault movement while Concealed and is moving from concealment terrain to concealment terrain, the Defender may only fire at the unit in the Defender's Location. In all other situations, the Defender may either fire at the Attacker as it crosses the hexside OR wait and fire at the unit in the same Location as the Defender. If the Attacker is either Pinned or Broken at the hexside, the unit is moved back to its last Location at the end of the Attacker's MPH. If the Attacker is attacked in the Defender's Location and is not eliminated, the unit stays in its new Location and that Location is marked with a CC counter. This way, a unit that moves "into" your building Location from outside of that building will usually cross an open ground hexside and be subject to FFMO & TPBF. Now, you still want to try stripping Concealment this way?

16. Bypass Movement. Every wondered why you can Bypass some terrain but not others? The reason why is you could only bypass woods and buildings in *Squad Leader*.

16.1 Additional Bypass Movement: Allow for Bypass movement of Brush, Grain, Kunai, Bamboo, & Hills. Allow for Bypass of Marsh (not Swamp) at 2x the movement rate.

16.2 End in Bypass: Allow for any unit to end their movement in Bypass. {Thanks Russ of MMP}

Robert "got DYO?" Hammond



HTB! Scenario Notes

By Chris Olden

This month we have 3 playtest scenarios from the fertile (furtive?) mind of Chris Olden. The scenario cards are not an integral part of the newsletter to allow you to more easily incorporate them into your scenario storage system. Please remember that these scenarios are not for general distribution, yet, so keep any photocopies within the Club. Now, a few words from our Designer...

A Tiger? (HTB! 6)

The literary heroes of my youth were Sgt. Rock and the men of Easy Company. They seemed to forever be in France during the summer of 1944. When I started playing ASL in August of 1998, one of the first things I thought about was how would Sgt. Rock translate to ASL. It wasn't until the Schwerpunkt gang put out the Medal of Honor and Victoria Cross scenario packs that the idea started to gel. First, it had to be fun! Second, it had to capture that cinematic/comic book atmosphere. Third, it had to be a challenge for both sides. I thought about what situation I wanted to represent and how it could be executed. Then I went in search of SSRs. The SSRs used in "A Tiger?" have all been used in other scenarios. Not because I was lacking for ideas, but because other people said what I wanted to say in a much more succinct manner. Although it has 5 overlays, it is a quick set-up, and in playtesting, we've been able to play two games (including set up) inside of an hour. (both players getting a chance to be Sgt. Rock and the Men In Black) Matt Romey pointed out that "A Tiger?" would lend itself well to being played using VASL. I know ahistorical scenarios are frowned upon in ASL. Hopefully, some of you brave souls will forgive me and give it a try just for fun. And, if it works out, maybe Sgt. Rock and the men of Easy Co. will make another appearance sometime down the road.

Pyrrhus At 'Pest' (HTB! 7)

This was a tough scenario to design. I felt that I had to capture the ferocity of the battle between not only an Allied Power (the Romanians) and an Axis Power (the Hungarians) but between the armies of two countries who had scores to settle with each other outside of their respective alliances. This is supposed to be a "low budget" version of "The Last Bid." 'Pest' was a modern urban fortress and the defenders had time to really fortify the city's buildings and industrial areas. I think the SSRs do a decent job of representing this. I like the way the RR Overlays worked out. I tried every city board in many combinations

before I was able to get what I was looking for. The Hungarians have all sorts of toys, but are lacking in the manpower to keep the Romanians at bay indefinitely. Use those fortifications and sewer movement capability well! The Romanians have toys as well and those tanks are completely expendable! (after all, the Romanians used whatever they could find on the battlefield by this point in the war) Put those Assault Engineers to use! And the flame-throwers should help to reduce those strongpoints. A scenario that's not for the faint of heart.

Das Fort Der Unbeugsam (HTB! 8)

Although not nearly as difficult to figure out which units were involved as in "Pyrrhus at 'Pest," trying to figure out how to get this scenario to work has been somewhat of a pain. A big thank you goes to Matt Romey for the VC's! His suggestion captured exactly what I wanted to represent in the scenario. This scenario takes place west of Budapest during one of the German attempts to break the siege and relieve the Hungarian and German units trapped in Budapest. However, in the Ardennes-like hills west of Budapest, the Russians had blocking forces in place. And although weakened by the almost continual fighting of the past few months, the rough terrain aided the Soviets. I really wanted to use a KGP map for this scenario, but none of them fit my "mind's eye" picture of the terrain. For all I know, a KGP map might be closer than what I ended up with! I'm interested to see how other players handle the forces in the AFV-unfriendly terrain. I think it is a major aspect of what makes this scenario difficult for both the attacker and defender.

Many of the scenarios we will see in our fine Newsletter will still be in Playtest Mode (which is true of all of our offerings this issue!). I can't encourage you enough to submit even the briefest comments as feedback if you happen to play one. And I wouldn't be a good Club Member if I didn't point out the fabulous new facility to submit AARs which Mr. Simonsen has provided for us on our very own Club website! Thanks. -ed.



Chris "got 'Pest?" Olden

You Can Never Have Too Many ASL Charts!

Rich Spilky provides us with another of his "ASL Tables." If you haven't found them yet, take a look on the ASL Crossroads website... -ed.

Motion, Bounding and Vehicular FT and FP Multipliers

Rules Sections: A7.24, D2.42, 3.31, 3.32, 3.6

FP Description	Situation 1	Situation 2	Situation 3	Situation 4	Situation 5
	Motion Vehicle in DFPh.	Beginning of Stopped Vehicle's MP, prior to expending a Start MP.	Stopped Vehicle during MP, after entering a new hex and expending a Stop MP.	Stopped Vehicle during AFPh, after entering a new hex and expending a Stop MP.	Non-Stopped Vehicle during MP or Motion Vehicle during AFPh.
MG, IFE, CE HT Passenger	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/4
Mounted Fire	1/4	1/4	1/4	1/4	1/8
Vehicular FT	1/2	1	1	1	1/2

Notes: Assume no concealment, long range fire, PBF or TPBF. Considers only Bounding, Bounding First, Motion/Non-Stopped, Mounted and AFPh Fire.

Marine Quiz Answers!

1. It becomes two 348 half squads. (G17.1)
2. Stealth. (G17.111)
3. In/after 7/44 vs Japanese. In/after 8/44 vs Germans. (G17.4)
4. A 768. (G17.11)
5. Bailing Out, voluntarily breaking, Wreck Check, para landing, WP MC, OVR Prevention MC, or Panji MC, among others. (G1.13)
6. No MOTION attempt is allowed based on the MF expenditure of a T-H Hero. (G1.423)
7. Since a T-H Hero's morale is NOT raised by one during a Banzai charge, his morale is 9 (or 8 if wounded). (G1.423)
8. Each Marsh hex adjacent to \geq one Jungle hex is a Swamp hex. (G7.1)
9. Red on White. (G18.6)
10. Regardless of scenario date, Unarmed U.S.M.C. squads are exchanged for 458 squads. (G17.14)

("Arnhem! Part II" Continued from page 1)

Airborne Museum. It does not have all the bells and whistles that cater to tourists (read: tourist trap). What it does have is a ton of WWII stuff. (You know, what your wife would call *junk*.) This place is right out of a Sanford and Son set, if you over look the operational 76mm Sherman in front and what I would call a rare vehicle, a German Gun T-34. (Just think of it in ASL terms: a tank that can move with a good gun!) It is hard to really describe the flavor of this museum, but what it looks like to me is that a bunch of guys just started collecting WWII stuff and after a while they opened a museum.

Once inside you begin to notice differences between this place and other museums. The displays are more tightly packed together and fuller, there is not really any attempt to describe or explain the war, only to display its artifacts. After we get into the museum we pass by an office with some older men playing cards. Upon noticing us, one of them jumps up and offers to give us a complete tour of the museum. I'm reluctant to accept. The guy proceeds to give us a personal tour of the entire place describing everything that we appear to take interest in. I couldn't possibly describe every artifact in the museum and won't try though one encounter does illustrate the flavor and experience. Our guide asks, "Would you like to see a German sniper rifle?" Having lost many a leader to one of these beasts, I said sure. We walk over to a case and he points to one of the guns. At first glance it appears to be just a German rifle with a telescopic sight. When I looked closer I saw that there were 23 notches cut into the stock. It was, for me, a disturbing sight...the realization that this rifle had been used and killed (possibly) Americans was very sobering. Like I said, this museum is full of things like this, from the set of Nazi china to the note written to a teacher (translated by Nancy), which said, "Please excuse my son from school. He had Hitler Youth training to attend." If you're into details, I would recommend this museum. It is close to both Arnhem and the Oosterbeek, and should only take an hour or two to visit.

On to the bridge. My knowledge of Arnhem and Operation MARKET GARDEN was pretty limited until this trip. I'd seen the movie for what ever that is worth. I had not read any critically written books on the operation or its battles and was for the most part ignorant. With that, it is safe to say that I had a lot to learn. Two things that I learned: First, the bridge that stands today is not the same bridge that stood 55 years ago. The Arnhem Bridge was destroyed about a month after the battle by Allied bombers. The current bridge is of the same construction and type as the original, but there were some structural changes made. The second thing I learned was that the town of Arnhem was completely destroyed. The main church (what would be block B on your Arnhem map) was the most significant structure in the town and it was rubble to about two blocks high (4 feet). I cannot overemphasize this fact. Looking at the Arnhem map, not one building was left standing. The only thing that remained was the road layout, like the skeleton of a sun-bleached corpse.

Because of the town's destruction, most of the buildings are of 50s and 60s construction. With the exception of the church mentioned before, there was no attempt to reconstruct any of the prewar buildings. Along these same lines, there has been no attempt to point out where significant action sites were located i.e. the schoolhouse. Believing that a picture is worth a thousand words, I'm including eight of the better photos that I took with Part III of this AAR! I'm going to reference the ABTF map in my explanations of each picture. Stay tuned!



("ASLOK 2000 AAR" Continued from page 2)

Setting the Stage (vs. Bryan Kropf) (Pete Shelling playtest):

This scenario is the second in a series of three scenarios played in sequence by a team of three players. It was part of Pete Shelling's Kursk Campaign Team Tournament. I love scenarios with variable OBs, fog of war, etc. and this had all of that. Both sides got to purchase a portion of their OB, which was then adjusted based on the success (or lack of it) of your team members' previous game. Bryan and I played our hearts out on this one. In the end, both of us achieved our objectives (which were not mutually exclusive) and I think we both earned it. Bryan is a good player, and was really a pleasure to play. I was so impressed with this scenario, and the whole team competition concept, that I spoke with Pete about including it at WCM IV. **(Rating: A+)**

U5 Point d'Appui (vs. John Appel) (G.I. Pack):

After my Kursk slugfest, I was looking for something that could be played with only a few brain cells. John is on the MMP playtest team, and is truly one of the nicest guys you could ever meet. He took the six-morale Americans defending a roadblock, and I took the surprisingly small German force of 4.5 squads with four 251-1 half-tracks and two half-tracks armed with a 37L gun and 20L AA gun, respectively. As late as turn 4, I admitted to John that my plan was really only a concept; I kind of just pushed forward, relying on those low-morale Ami squads to break at the first sound of gunfire, which they did. I eventually won this scenario, but it was pretty close. This scenario plays quickly. I thought it was challenging for both sides and would play it again anytime. **(Rating: A)**

SP55 Batterie du Port (vs. Darryl Wright) (Schwerpunkt 5):

My last scenario was against my long-time ASLOK friend and opponent Darryl Wright. Since we were both leaving for the airport at 2:30 pm, we wanted something fairly short. This scenario has Vichey French defending a fortified, single hex two story building with four 105 ART, 4 green squads, and two crews with HMGs. Darryl took the attacking American force with mostly 2nd line infantry and four M3 tanks (yeah, the ones with canister). Darryl had a real hard time getting the infantry to close with the HMGs shredding them; that left my 105's (firing HE) to duel with the tanks. In the end, my Frenchies held out. If you're looking for something different, give this one a look. It plays pretty quickly also. **(Rating: B+)**

If you're keeping score, yes I was undefeated in 7 games, most of them close. Of course, I didn't compete in *any* tournaments (except the Kursk playtest) nor did I turn my sheet in for Grofaz. I generally chose long scenarios that I otherwise wouldn't have been able to play due to time constraints. I had a blast; this was my best tournament yet. I got to spend a lot of time with my good friends Rob Feinstein and Eric Johnson, and to visit with so many of my ASL friends from around the country. Rob, Eric and I enjoyed cocktails with MMP-ers Perry Cocke, Brian Youse and Carl Fago on Wednesday evening. It was four days of great games, great food, and great conversations with so many interesting and entertaining people from around the country. Oh, and beer, too. <sigh> It just doesn't get any better...



Jim "got CG?" Aikens

Words That Echo...

"Casualties: many. Percentage dead: unknown. Combat efficiency: **We are winning.**"

Col. David M. Shoup, USMC, sitrep at 1600 to Julian Smith, November 21, 1943, D+1 at Betio.

D.Y.O. "Scenario Design"

By Evan "got SP?" Sherry

Before the announcement that Schwerpunkt would be no more, I had the pleasure of picking Evan's brains on the art of scenario design. -ed.

HTB!: How long've you been playing ASL?

ES: I've been playing ASL since 1987. I got into wargaming at age ten when I started playing the old Milton Bradley *Battle Cry* and *Broadside* games. They kept me interested until I found *Panzerblitz* in a local toy store. I played that and *Panzer Leader* with my good friend Wayne Ernst until one day in 1978 when I spent a precious \$14 on *Squad Leader*. I got the game and was quite overwhelmed by the rules. Wayne and I eventually taught ourselves to play and that was the end of the *Panzer Leader* days – I was hooked. I played *Squad Leader* from 1978 to 1987. In 1979 I met Randy Thompson who was also learning to play SL. I gave him a few lessons/beatings (the only way to learn how to be a good wargamer). Randy was a fast learner and almost immediately we became good friends and SL fanatics. We continued to play SL until 1986 when Randy came back from Marine basic training with the *ASL Rulebook* and *Beyond Valor*. He gave the book to me and told me to read it and teach us how to play. At first we were angry that AH had changed our beloved game. In fact, the *ASL Rulebook* sat for several months on my shelf until reluctantly, I pulled it down and taught myself how to play. Randy helped us through some of the tough rules and soon we discarded the old SL stuff in favor of the system we finally accepted as much better than SL.

HTB!: When did you first start designing scenarios?

ES: Right after I learned how to play *Squad Leader* in 1978, I quickly found that only a few of the scenarios actually appealed to me. Except for "Hill 621," I found the SL scenarios to be rather dull. After only playing a few games, I started designing my own scenarios featuring types of vehicles and orders of battle that interested me more. Incidentally, 'Hill 621' is probably my all time favorite scenario. Not so much because it is well balanced but because of the memory of countless hours of sheer enjoyment of the game this scenario gave me. That one scenario influenced me most and all of my scenario designs owe a little to that classic scenario. My scenario design obsession went to a new level when *Cross of Iron* appeared. Finally I had Tigers and Panthers and Russian tanks with big honkin' guns. As for ASL scenarios, my first was designed in 1987. Since the beginning of my SL/ASL career, I have designed in the neighborhood of 200 scenarios. Most of the early stuff was purely hypothetical but historically possible. Later, I used ASL as a training tool to test out various tactical situations that interested me as a U.S. Army officer. I moved to strictly historical scenario designs in 1990 after I returned from the U.S. Army Armor Officers Advanced Course.

HTB! Where do you get your ideas?

ES: I get scenario ideas mostly from reading unit histories. However, I get many from reading general works on campaigns such as Allen's *One More River*, Pergrin's *First Across the Rhine*, and D'Este's *Fatal Decision*. The latter author is probably the finest military writer of our time. Works like these have vivid battle accounts and terrific order of battle information that are essential to designing a good scenario. With a good book, a scenario will almost immediately leap off the page and onto my table and game boards.

HTB!: How does a scenario idea form in your mind?

ES: Usually I get a scenario idea in the form of the way the battle moved about the field and the way the battle ended...the scheme of maneuver. Other times, the order of battle or a certain vehicle will be mentioned in the writing and that will draw me into further research of the action. I have a photographic image of all the boards in my mind so I can give you an initial board configuration without even pulling the boards. This comes from too many hours hunched over cardboard. The opposing forces usually come at the same time as the initial order of battle forces. The exception to this is early war scenarios and just about anything featuring the Russians. Those take more research. The victory conditions are usually the last thing I formulate. Victory conditions are a little tricky and sometimes when I put a scenario together with forces, special rules, and boards, I'll sit back and think "now what do I do with this bloody thing?" The victory conditions are usually a synthesis of what the unit was actually trying to do. Then I take that and combine it with what the actual end-result of the battle was. When you do this you need to define what your idea of success for a given side is then put it into ASL victory terms. As a side note, I read a comment on the ASL mailing list that stated "in real life there are no victory conditions in battle". I have to say that nothing could be further from the truth in military terms. Having been an army officer and having written hundreds of operations orders and participated in countless planning sessions as an intelligence/operations officer, I must say that paragraph #2 of every U.S. Army operations order IS the victory condition in real life. Now whether or not it survives the first five minutes of

Where Do I Start? OBA Scenarios

By Bob Smith

Ever get a hankerin' for a particular type of scenario? You know, you've been playing a lot of Eastern Front with your usual bud, lately, and you suddenly sit up and decide..." damn, I would really like to sink my teeth into a nice early-war scenario." For me, this usually happens after I run into a rule section that I just don't understand or which I know I need more practice to master. Well, the next thing I know, I am paging through binders of scenarios trying to locate scenarios that fit the bill. Yes, the Scenario Finder database on the web is a great tool, but I find it often can't parse down the list the way I want it to. So, I supplement that fine tool with other lists. This issue, Bob Smith has compiled a short yet interesting list of OBA scenarios for us. So, if you're feeling lucky... -ed.

Both Sides Get OBA:

A48: Prelude to Breakout
J: The Bitche Salient
SP17: Cross of Lorraine
SP21: Johnny One
SP26: Wollersheim!

Defender Gets OBA:

A68: Acts of Defiance
50: Age Old Foes
A98: Crossing the Gniloi Tikitsch
22: Kurhaus Clash
D: The Hedgehog of Piepsk
FF11: Tough Luck

Attacker Gets OBA:

E: Hill 621
A94: Last Defense Line
31: The Old Town
A81: They Fired On Odessa
FC2: Road to Rome

Did you Know? Tips from Tokyo... By Rob Stai

1. Japanese SMC may conduct Infantry Overruns (G1.4)
2. Japanese may always convert AT mines into Daisy Chains (G1.613)
3. Second Line Japanese squads are **not** Stealthy. (G1.6)
4. Japanese cannot create leaders through Self Rally (G1.62)

SoCal ASL Club

Challenge Cup Standings

January 8, 2001

Here are the rules for our Challenge Cup:

1. All club tournament games count [EXC: If the TD states otherwise BEFORE the scenario is played.].
2. All other play between members count unless both agreed against beforehand.
3. No limit on the total amount of games per calendar month.
4. You can play the same opponent only twice during the same calendar month [EXC: Tournament games.].
5. A minimum of 9 different opponents must be played.
6. A minimum of 11 games must be played with 1 of the games in a tournament format.*
7. Team play is ineligible.
8. Any questions or disagreements with standings, contact the Challenge Cup meister, preferably in writing.
9. There will be two categories, each with its own winner, to the Challenge Cup: "Gonzo" and "Finesse."***
10. The Challenge Cup period lasts from the beginning of WCM2000 (Feb. 4, 2000) up to, but not including, WCM2001.

* Enforced ONLY if two or more club sponsored/organized tournaments are ran during the Challenge Cup period.

** The "Gonzo" winner is determined by scoring the most points - five for each win, one for each loss, three each for a draw.

*** The "Finesse" winner is determined by how hard a record is to achieve using the following formula:

$$W! * L!$$

$$[(W/2+L/2)!]^2$$

W=Win L=Loss

The Gonzo and Finesse Winners each get the following awards....

- Free membership in the club for one year.
- Free attendance to one One-Day Tourney.
- Half-off their WCM tournament registration.

If the same person wins BOTH awards then that person will be awarded....

- Free membership in the club for one year.
- Free attendance to one One-Day Tourney.
- Half-off their WCM tournament registration.
- Free T-shirt for the WCM tournament.

If you have any questions about the Cup, please contact the Cupmeister, Matt Romey at:

ChallengeCup@socalasl.com

NOTE

Only Active Members are Listed in the Standings to the Right. Highlighted Members have qualified already.

Player Name	Wins	Losses	Draws	Gonzo Pts	Gonzo Rank	Finesse Pts	Finesse Rank
Matthew Cicero	19	5	0	100	1	63.17	2
Brandon Liesemeyer	16	3	0	83	2	96.26	1
Bruce Kirkaldy	15	3	0	78	3	58.71	3
Matt Romey	11	7	1	65	NA	1.53	NA
Paul Simonsen	9	6	0	51	4	1.33	6
Charles Hammond	7	12	1	50	5	-1.88	8
Scott Faulk	8	10	0	50	NA	-1.11	NA
Robert Hammond	8	7	0	47	6	1.03	7
Jim Aikens	7	4	0	39	7	1.46	4
Ron Mosher	7	4	0	39	7	1.46	4
Cloyde Angell	7	2	0	37	NA	3.62	NA
Eric Van Horn	6	4	0	34	NA	1.2	NA
Steve Svare	4	11	0	31	NA	-4.83	NA
Sheldon Ryland II	5	6	0	31	NA	-1.04	NA
Herman Frettlrohr	6	1	0	31	NA	5.5	NA
Chris Castellana	5	5	0	30	NA	1	NA
Rob Stai	5	4	0	29	NA	1.05	NA
Mike Sengottaiyan	5	3	0	28	NA	1.25	NA
Doug DeMoss	5	2	0	27	NA	1.76	NA
Chris Nielsen	5	1	0	26	NA	3.46	NA
Scott Thompson	3	10	0	25	9	-6.15	9
Fred Timm	4	4	0	24	NA	1	NA
Rodney Kinney	4	3	0	23	NA	1.06	NA
Bob Smith	2	12	0	22	NA	-36.8	NA
Bryan Earl	3	5	0	20	NA	-1.25	NA
Chas Argent	3	5	0	20	NA	-1.25	NA
Doug Creutz	3	4	0	19	NA	-1.06	NA
David Nicholas	3	4	0	19	NA	-1.06	NA
Robert Feinstein	3	0	0	15	NA	3.69	NA
Roger Petronzio	1	10	0	15	NA	-44.76	NA
Eric Johnson	2	3	0	13	NA	-1.08	NA
Dan Plachta	2	3	0	13	NA	-1.08	NA
Steve Dethlefsen	2	3	0	13	NA	-1.08	NA
Eric Morton	2	2	0	12	NA	1	NA
Stance Nixon	1	6	0	11	NA	-5.5	NA
Karl Johnson	1	5	0	10	NA	-3.46	NA
Rich Mosher	1	4	0	9	NA	-2.27	NA
John Knowles	1	3	0	8	NA	-1.58	NA
David Rosner	0	7	0	7	NA	-38.6	NA
Brian Abela	1	2	0	7	NA	-1.21	NA
Dave Reinking	1	1	0	6	NA	1.18	NA
Ronald Fajarit	0	5	0	5	NA	-11.42	NA
Steve Treatman	0	2	0	2	NA	-2.26	NA
Bernie Howell	0	0	0	0	NA	1	NA
Roger Bernard	0	0	0	0	NA	1	NA

("Scenario Design" Continued from page 10)

battle is another thing. In fact that end-state I mentioned earlier is actually what a real commander will pass down to his subordinate leaders so that they will know what the commander considers success of the mission. In that way I have used what I have learned from the military and put it into ASL terms.

HTB!: Where do you go for scenario research? What sources do you use?

ES: I normally do my initial research from my own extensive military history library and those of my good friends, Mike Faulkner and Greg Davis. If these don't help, I turn to my local library. From there I go to inter-library loan for those out-of-print books and obscure and very expensive books. I have, on occasion, consulted directly with the author of a book. During my research on 'Evicting Yamigishi', I was fortunate enough to communicate with David Glantz who is the foremost American authority on the Russian army. Currently I am in the process of going to the ultimate source, an interview with an actual participant in the action. That method will be a first for me.

HTB!: What types of scenario do you like to design?

ES: Contrary to the *Schwerpunkt* reputation of tournament-sized actions, I prefer medium sized combined arms actions with lots of vehicles and artillery on both sides and lots of options. I find that good Japanese scenarios are the most difficult for me to design. Your typical PTO action with Americans attacking Japanese is usually not very exciting from a design point of view. The equipment options for the Japanese are limited and, frankly, boring. With few exceptions, battles in the PTO were not really issues in doubt. That is to say it was not a matter of "are we going to take that atoll/island," but rather, "how many marines/soldiers will it cost and how long will it take." To me, the "bug hunt" is not a very exciting action to portray in scenario design.

HTB!: What factors help make a great scenario?

ES: A great scenario is one that is, above all, fun. Then it must have some modicum of balance and be an interesting tactical problem. Then to cap it off it needs a "hook." We've been talking about this a lot here in the Tampa design group. A scenario "hook" can be in the form of a unique SSR or victory condition, but more likely takes the form of an unusual or lesser-used piece of equipment. Right now I'm on a JS Ilm kick. Greg Davis currently has a flame-thrower fetish and Mike Faulkner, well you never know what he's likely to come up with.

HTB!: How does the playtesting process work?

ES: Here in Tampa we start the preliminary testing within the group. In that stage we hope to clear out the most obvious problems, then release it to outside testing. From there on it is a process of playing and analyzing AARs and consulting with the scenario designer to get the scenario balanced and in a form we all agree on. It usually takes about six months to playtest a scenario thoroughly. It used to take us a full year to test scenarios for an issue but we've gotten better and more playtesters are helping. I must say that most of the credit for a great scenario should go to the playtesters.

HTB!: If you had all the time/resources in the world, what would you love to design?

ES: Well that is an interesting question. I'm actually quite content with the way my ideas about scenario design and those of my associates here in Tampa are headed. I'm happy with what we have done. We have accomplished all we ever set out to do with *Schwerpunkt* and then a little more. I will say that if I had the resources, I'd like to consult with some of our surviving veterans on a more extensive basis to complete a series of scenarios featuring ETO tank actions. Thanks for asking me to be part of your project. I'm always happy to talk about ASL.

Thanks to YOU and the entire SP team for so many fun scenarios! -ed.

Southern California ASL Club

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Credits

Quote:

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Historical research:

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Special thanks to Rodney Kinney for the use of VASL map and counter images.

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Upcoming Events...

February: West Coast Melee IV (2/1-2/4)
April: North-South Melee: Spring Challenge (One-Day Tournament)
May: Hit The Beach! Volume 6, Number 2

Did you Know? By Brandon Liesemeyer

Your American TD has suddenly found itself under the gun of a King Tiger. A kill is very un-likely and you gack the Motion Attempt because your opponent wisely only spent 2MP in your LOS. What do you do? You must run, but your adversary has a TH of 8 when you Start! An inexperienced player will just Start and hope for the best: and his tank will be dead 72.2% of the time. An experienced player will flip the counter over and see that he has SP5. Great! A *more* experienced player will flip the counter over, see SP5, and say, "Nice, but I've got a better idea!" Why you ask? Because you have a 27.8% chance to roll ≤ 5 for SP smoke whereas you would have a 33.3% chance to get smoke with Vehicular Smoke Grenades! That's a difference of 5.5%. Before you scoff and discount this 5.5% remember this difference is nearly **twice** the probability of scoring a CH (2.8%). Getting smoke decreases your chance of being killed to 41.7%! Moral of the story: know your probabilities and remember that the American SPs are useless unless you want the smoke to stay around for awhile.